

**Perceptions of safety
among people living and working
in the Finglas Community
Safety Forum catchment**

June 2019

This report should be cited as Walsh, K, McNally, M and Bennett, J (2018/19)
Perceptions of safety among people living and working in the Finglas Community
Safety Forum catchment.
Finglas Safety Forum.

For further information about Finglas Safety Forum,
please contact Michelle McNally Finglas Safety Forum Coordinator.

Finglas Safety Forum
27 Annamoe Terrace
Cabra, Dublin 7
T: 086 411 5783
e: fsfcoordinator@finglascabraldtf.ie



***finglas* safety**
FORUM



@FinglasSafety



Finglas Safety Forum

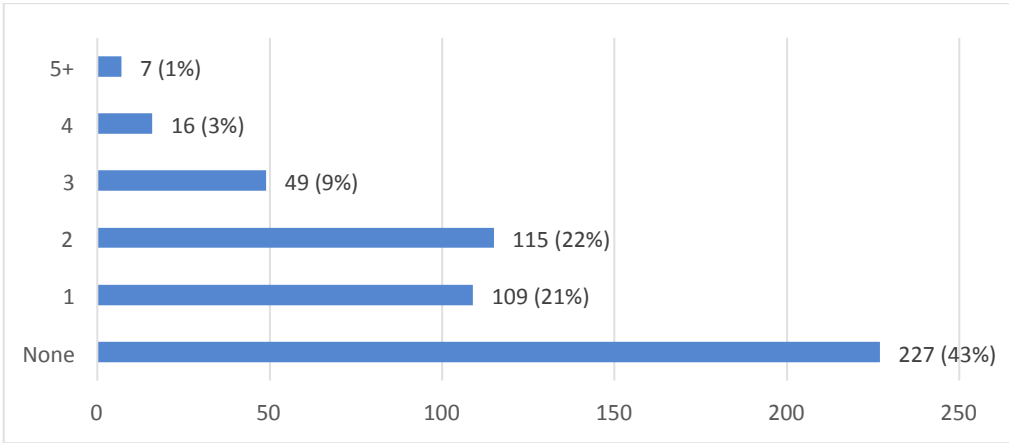


www.finglassafetyforum.ie

Households with children under 18 years

43% of survey respondents lived in households with one to two children aged under 18 years of age. A further 43% of household had no children under the age of 18. See Figure A.4 for details.

Figure A.4 No of children in the households of survey respondents



Contents

Acknowledgements 5

Executive Summary 6

1 Introduction..... 8

 1.1 Crime prevention..... 8

 1.2 Crime prevention in Ireland and in Finglas..... 8

 1.2 The Finglas Safety Forum..... 9

 1.3 Research aim, objectives and outcomes 10

 1.4 Research methodology..... 11

2 Research Findings 14

 2.1 Overview..... 14

 2.2 Safety at home 14

 2.3 Safety at work..... 15

 2.4 General safety in Finglas..... 16

 2.5 Safety issues for particular groups 23

 2.6 An Garda Síochána 25

 2.7 A partnership approach to safety..... 28

 2.8 Awareness of the work of the Finglas Safety Forum 29

3 Conclusions..... 30

 3.1 Safety in Finglas – An overview 30

 3.2 A partnership approach to safety..... 31

 3.3 Awareness of the work of the Finglas Safety Forum 31

4 Recommendations..... 32

 4.1 Recommendation Development Process 32

 4.2 The Recommendations..... 32

References..... 35

Appendix 1 Profile of Survey Respondents 36

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 1.1 The process of identifying the valid sample.....12

Table 1.1 Focus groups held as part of the research.....13

Figure 2.1 Safety in your home.....14

Figure 2.2 Safety at work.....16

Figure 2.3 How safe survey respondents felt engaging in particular activities in Finglas.....16

Figure 2.4 Feeling ‘not safe’ broken down by gender across a range of activities.....18

Figure 2.5 Other local safety related concerns.....20

Figure 2.6 Local issues survey respondent were ‘very’ and ‘somewhat’ concerned about.....21

Figure 2.7 How survey respondents became aware of Finglas Community Safety Forum.....29

Foreword

Finglas Safety Forum commissioned Kathy Walsh of KW Research and Associates Ltd. to undertake this survey. The main purpose of the survey was to deepen the understanding among all stakeholders of the perceptions of safety among people living and working in the Finglas Safety Forum catchment.

This report confirmed much of what is discussed on a regular basis by those who attend safety forum meetings in Finglas. It also confirmed the accuracy of the knowledge about local safety issues among members of the local community who attend these meetings.

I would particularly like to thank Kathy Walsh for her devoted time, effort and support throughout the whole research process. I would like to also extend my gratitude to both Finglas Cabra Local Drug and Alcohol Task Force and Dublin North West Area Partnership who funded this piece of research.

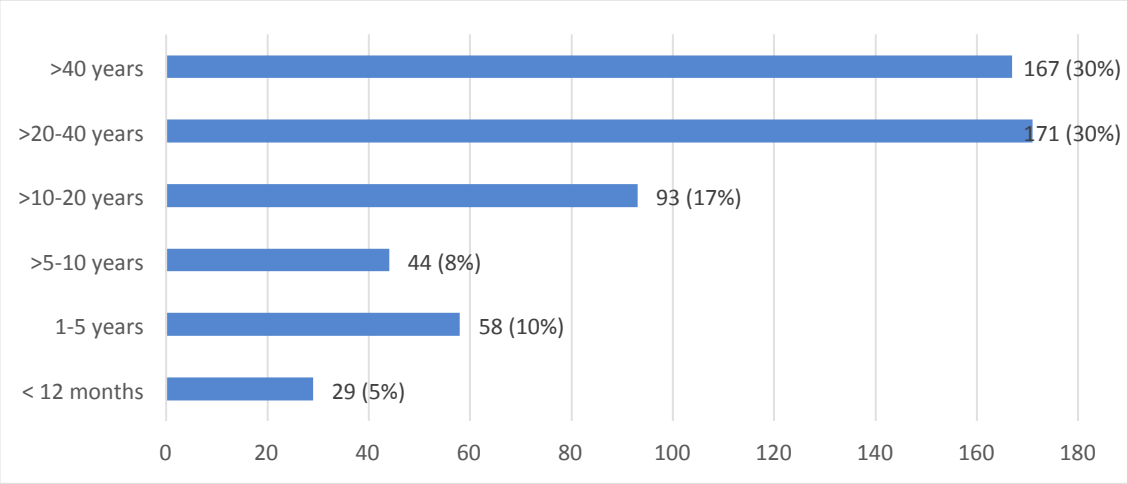
A word of thanks to all those who participated in the survey and focus group discussions. Your input in the survey and focus group discussions were, and continue to be, invaluable to the forum in helping to identify and inform the work of Finglas Safety Forum going forward. As such, I plan to share the findings and recommendations contained in this report with key stakeholders, where relevant.

Fundamentally, the function and success of the forum operates on the basis of on-going collaboration and support from elected and community representatives, local residents and key organisations. Thus, as Coordinator of the Finglas Safety Forum, I would finally like to extend my gratitude to all stakeholders, organisations and local residents involved in the forum. I look forward to continuing to work together with the local community and key stakeholders with the aim of making Finglas a safer place to live in, work in and visit.

Michelle McNally
Finglas Safety Forum Coordinator

June 2019

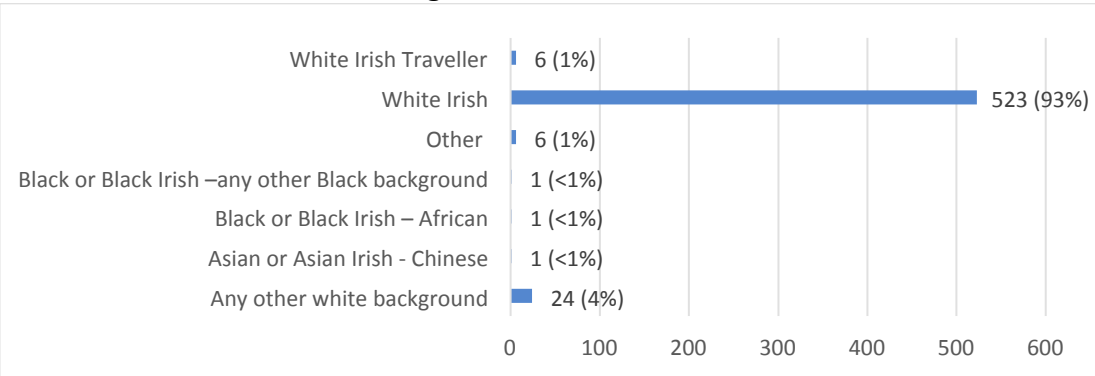
Table A.2 Length of time living and/or working in Finglas



Ethnic or cultural background

93% of survey respondents identified as White Irish, 1% identified as White Irish Traveller, while 4% identified as “any other white background” and 1% as other. See Table A.1 for details.

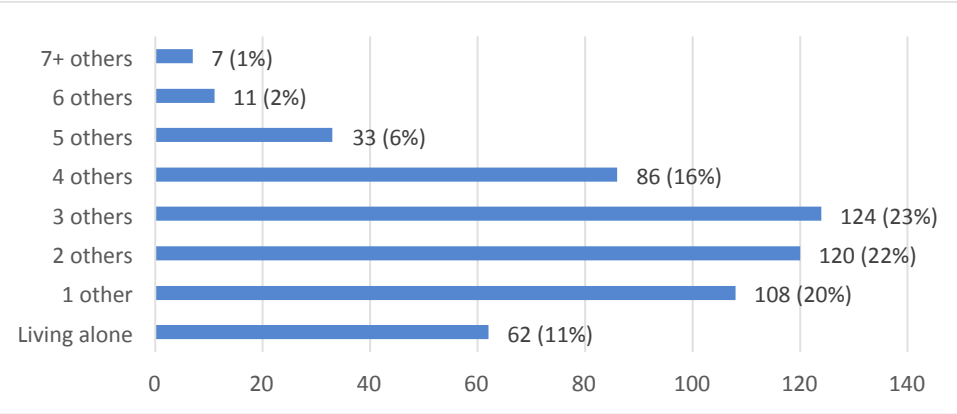
Table A.1 Ethnic or cultural background



Household size

The majority of survey respondents were in households with at least one other person. The average household size of survey respondents was 3.5 persons. See Figure A.3 for details.

Figure A.3.1 Household size of survey respondents



Appendix 1 Profile of Survey Respondents

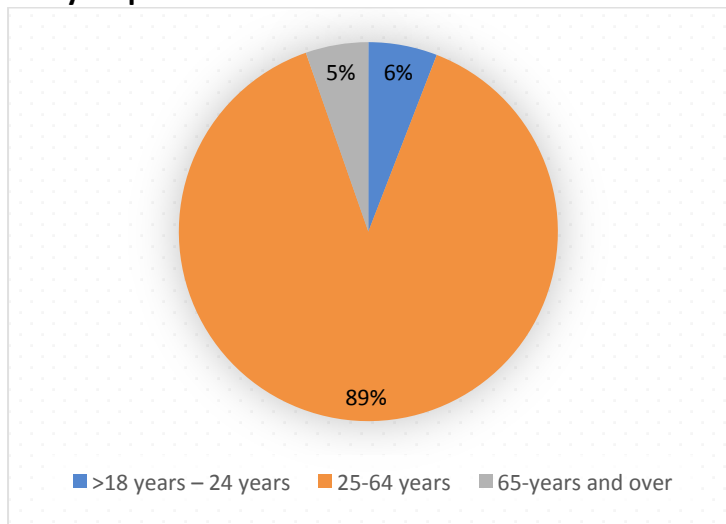
Gender

75% of survey respondents identified as female and 25% as male. Two respondents chose to identify their gender as “other”. See Table A.1 for details.

Age of survey respondents

The majority of survey respondents fell into the 25 – 64 years age category, 5% were >18 – 24 years and 6% were 65 years and over. See Table A.2 for details

Table A.2 Age of survey respondents



Length of time either resident and/or working in the Finglas area

60% of the survey respondents had either lived and/or worked in the Finglas area for over 20+ years. 17% of survey respondents were living/working in the Finglas area for 10-20 years, 8% for 5-10 years, 10% for 1-5 years and 5% for less than one year. See Table A.2 for details.

Acknowledgements

The preparation of this study of ‘Perceptions of Safety in Finglas’ involved individuals and organisations across the Finglas area and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people and groups who gave their time, knowledge and experiences. I would particularly like to thank:

The staff of St Helena’s Resource Centre who assisted in the piloting of the questionnaire.

The staff at the Finglas Centre, St Helena’s Resource Centre, Dublin North West Area Partnership, Finglas Citizens Information Centre and Finglas Adult Education Centre who supported the distribution and dissemination of the questionnaire locally. They also facilitated the collection of the paper versions of the questionnaire.

The staff at Pavee Point, Finglas Youth Resource Centre, the Finglas Centre and St. Helena’s Resource Centre, as well as the Intercultural Group based at Donard Community Centre who participated in the various focus groups.

Particular thanks are also due to Michelle McNally the Finglas Safety Co-ordinator who was a pleasure to work with throughout and George Akomfrah who looked after the data analysis.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to the 615 local residents who participated in the survey and focus groups. This study would not have worked without your input.

Kathy Walsh
Researcher

Finglas, December 2018

Executive Summary

Introduction

Finglas Safety Forum (FSF) was established in 2004 with the aim of bringing all relevant stakeholders together to make Finglas a safer place to live in, work in and visit. It is funded by Finglas Cabra Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force and involves Dublin City Council, An Garda Síochána, local residents and more recently Fingal County Council.

The purpose of this research is for the Forum and its partners to gain a greater understanding of the perception of safety¹ among the wider population of residents in Finglas. The research was conducted using a community survey supplemented by five focus groups (with migrants, older people, parents, Travellers and young people) and involved over 600 local participants.

Findings

At Home: The vast majority (>90%) of research participants felt safe or very safe in their homes and coming and going from their homes during the day. Participants felt less safe at night both in their homes and going to and from their homes. Higher levels of anti-social behaviour were reported in certain parts of Finglas with pockets of this kind of behaviour across the Finglas area. Much of the low level anti-social behaviour was linked to children and young people hanging around unsupervised in the early evening (e.g. 7-10 pm).

At Work: Of the 35% survey respondents who worked in Finglas, almost one in five of these individuals did not feel safe in their work at any time during the day. After 6pm the number of people who did not feel safe rose to one in four, with a greater proportion of women feeling unsafe than men.

Out and About: Research participants generally reported feeling safe undertaking a range of activities during the day. Feelings of safety dipped dramatically at night however particularly among women. 'Going to the park' and 'Taking exercise' were identified as the least safe activities both during the day and at night. Participants linked their feelings of anxiety to people hanging around in various states of intoxication, levels of anti-social behaviour and begging around the shops. Waiting for the local buses was another activity that approximately two in five survey respondents did not feel safe undertaking either at night or during the day. It was also the case that two in five respondents did not feel safe on public transport at night in Finglas. This was particularly linked to anti-social behaviour on the upper deck of the bus.

Other Safety Issues: Other key safety issues for research participants included the use of scramblers, quad motorbikes in the local parks and on local footpaths, levels of illegal dumping and open drug use/drug dealing and street drinking. Vandalism of public and private property were also identified as issues as were the absence of respect for older and more vulnerable residents. The incidence of petty crime, the prevalence of begging (linked

¹ Safety is defined as how safe people feel from external crime and disorder in the home, on the street, coming and going from local services and facilities in the wider Finglas area.

References

Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland (2018). *The Future of Policing in Ireland*. [Online][http://policereform.ie/en/POLREF/The%20Future%20of%20Policing%20in%20Ireland\(web\).pdf/Files/The%20Future%20of%20Policing%20in%20Ireland\(web\).pdf](http://policereform.ie/en/POLREF/The%20Future%20of%20Policing%20in%20Ireland(web).pdf/Files/The%20Future%20of%20Policing%20in%20Ireland(web).pdf) [Accessed 3 May 2019].

Fitzsimmons, F. (2019). *Police hail crackdown on scrambler bikes 'most successful' ever*. [online] liverpoolecho. Available at: <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/police-hail-crackdown-scrambler-bikes-11840643> [Accessed 18 Jun. 2019].

Maguire, M., Morgan, R. and Reiner, R. (2007). *The Oxford Handbook of Criminology*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

drinking in public places expressed as a concern for all survey respondents. FSF will advocate for Dublin City Council to:

- a) develop a clear policy for the reporting and safe collection of discarded drug use paraphernalia to be communicated to all living and working in Finglas and
- b) to evaluate if safe disposal bins at key locations would be effective in Finglas similar to the bins currently being used in the City Centre.

Recommendation 11: Action to reduce local levels of intimidation in public places

Research participants were concerned about groups of people hanging around in public places and/or engaging in open drug dealing and street drinking. The research found that intimidation from drug dealers and others often discourages residents from reporting these incidents to Gardaí. FSF will advocate for a long-term commitment by the Gardaí to high visible 24-hour foot patrols within the vicinity of neighbourhood shopping areas and the bus stops most affected, so that residents and business owners can go about normal lives within these locations, unhindered by drug dealing and drinking.

Recommendation 12: Reducing levels of intimidation related to drug debt

Within the research it was clear that some local families are regularly threatened with violence if they do not cover a family member's drug debt. FSF will continue to work with the Gardaí and all relevant local services to find positive resolutions to cases of drug debt intimidation.

to the level of abuse you get if you do not give) and the issue of loose horses were also raised on various occasions.

Safety Issues for Particular Groups

Young people's safety concerns were linked to being 'robbed', 'bullied' 'chased' as well as getting involved in physical and online fights. Being part of a gang (large or small) was seen as a strategy for staying safe, as was keeping your head down. The places the young people indicated they generally felt safe were in their homes and at the Finglas Youth Resource Centre.

Travellers living on Traveller sites without exception reported feeling less safe now compared to five years ago. Travellers linked their feelings of being less safe to the increasing numbers of Travellers using and, in some cases, selling drugs, which, in turn, is leading to petty theft to feed habits and, in some cases, the settled community coming to the sites looking to buy or to sell or indeed for family members to pay a drug debt.

Travellers and An Garda Síochána: Many research participants recognised that the local Gardaí has a hard job. There was however a clear majority view that the Gardaí were not very visible locally and particularly at night Residents reported slow response times and a feeling that they were increasingly being left to deal with things themselves.

Young People and An Garda Síochána: The young people consulted as part of this study were generally wary of the local Gardaí with two or three exceptions. The young people were of the view that the local Gardaí often make quick judgments about young people based on where they live, their family name and what they are wearing. The majority of the young people indicated that they would be very reluctant to go the local Gardaí for fear of others hearing about it and being labelled a rat/getting a rat scar.

Migrants and An Garda Síochána: There was a shared view among migrants that some Gardaí did not treat their concerns/issues seriously because they were migrants with some nationalities having poorer reputations than others among the Gardaí. There was also a view that once you got your citizenship you were treated more seriously.

A Partnership Approach to Safety and the FSF: Research participants were overwhelmingly in favour of An Garda Síochána and the local authorities working together to make Finglas a safe place for all. Just over half of survey respondents were aware of the existence of the Forum.

1 Introduction

1.1 Crime prevention

For the purposes of this report, crime prevention is conceptualised as having three typologies; Primary Prevention, Secondary Prevention and Tertiary Prevention.

- Primary prevention entails work directed at general populations and places to address potentially criminogenic factors before the onset of the problem.
- Secondary prevention involves work with people or places identified as ‘at risk’ because of some pre-dispositional factor.
- Tertiary prevention is directed towards preventing the recurrence of criminal events, by targeting known offenders, victims, or places that are already part of the crime pattern.

Based on these typologies the work of Finglas Safety Forum is mainly focused on Primary Prevention in the Finglas area. It has also engaged in secondary prevention action in relation to places in Finglas where disorderly behaviour and drug dealing are more likely to take place.

1.2 Crime prevention in Ireland and in Finglas

Although concerns about the economy have predominated in recent years, crime remains high on the list of important societal issues, given that crime and the fear of crime negatively affect the quality of life of many. Crime prevention is the attempt to reduce and or deter crime and criminals. The term is specifically applied to efforts made by government to reduce crime, enforce the law and maintain criminal justice.

In Ireland, the Department of Justice and Equality, in conjunction with An Garda Síochána and other Government departments and agencies are responsible for the development of a variety of crime prevention measures. A key element of crime prevention work is engagement with communities in order to understand the problems they face and how to tackle them. Involving the general public and community can, if done effectively, lead to greater levels of trust in the criminal justice system.

Community Policing

Community engagement is a mainstay of the role of the Garda Community Policing Officers. A useful description of community policing is contained in a recent report on policing in Ireland. “The term ‘community policing’ has been used to mean many things, but it is really all about front line police knowing their communities well, being visible and engaged in those communities and developing mutually respectful partnerships to solve problems and achieve community safety (Commission on the Future of Policing, 2018).”

Recommendation 3: Enhancing safety on public transport

As public transport is such a crucial service to the economic and social wellbeing of the people in Finglas, FSF will consult with key local stakeholders (e.g. the Gardaí, Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, Dublin Bus etc.) to identify practical solutions to the issues reported such as the anti-social activity that occurs particularly on the upper deck of the buses that serve Finglas.

Recommendation 4: Waste management, Parks and Landscape Division

Illegal dumping was viewed by a majority of survey respondents as an issue they were very concerned about; a concern that is regularly voiced by many attendees at Safety Forum meetings. As such, FSF will continue to work with Dublin City Council, Public Domain, Waste Management and Parks Department to identify solutions to litter and propose initiatives to enhance the environment of the neighbourhoods affected.

Recommendation 5: Public Lighting

Going to the park was identified as the least safe activity with 24% of survey respondents feeling unsafe going to the park during the day and 67% feeling unsafe going to the park at night. Thus, FSF will communicate the findings arising from the survey in relation to lighting directly to Dublin City Council Public Lighting Section with the view to looking at ways to improve street lighting in the area.

Recommendation 6: Road maintenance

FSF will continue to consult with Dublin City Council Public Domain and Road Maintenance Divisions in relation to potholes, roads/ footpaths that require being investigated/ repaired.

Recommendation 7: Social inclusion

As part of this research the Forum engaged with groups who do not normally participate in/attend Forum meetings, for example, Travellers, migrants, young people, older people, people with disabilities to name a few. FSF will continue this engagement, particularly with young people and Travellers so that their distinct views are heard and included in the Safety Forum process.

Recommendation 8: Continue to raise awareness of the Forum among the wider community

FSF will continue to work to increase awareness of the Forum among Finglas residents. The FSF social media platforms and web presence will be further developed to achieve this.

Recommendation 9: A follow up Safety Survey in 2020/21

This survey the first of its kind to be undertaken in Finglas has provided FSF with a very useful baseline understanding of community safety in Finglas. FSF will undertake the same survey in 2020/21 providing a useful way for Finglas Safety Forum to observe changes in community perceptions of safety over time.

Recommendation 10: Safe collection of discarded drug use paraphernalia

Discarded drug use paraphernalia was a recurring issue in the research with 58% of survey respondents having reported feeling very concerned about this and street drug-dealing and

4 Recommendations

4.1 Recommendation Development Process

The recommendations were developed by members of the Finglas Safety Forum in response to the findings and conclusions made by the researcher. The researcher was not involved in the development of the recommendations.

4.2 The Recommendations

Recommendation 1: **Seek changes in national legislation in respect of the misuse of scramblers/quad motorbikes and the need for these vehicles to be crushed**

An overwhelming 76% of survey respondents reported feeling 'very concerned' about the dangerous and anti-social use of scramblers/quad motorbikes. In effect, the Finglas Safety Forum will continue to advocate for legislation to enable the Gardaí to enter public parks/green areas in response to the reports of the dangerous use of scramblers/quad motorbikes thereby enabling a more effective enforcement strategy to be put in place to tackle the use of these vehicles in parks and public green spaces. This report is recommending for legislation to be amended so that Gardaí can seize and then 'crush' scrambler/quad motorbikes being driven dangerously in public spaces in order to protect the public from harm.

A policy of crushing scramblers/quad motorbikes is not new. In the UK, a policy of crushing is currently being employed. For example, in 2012 Merseyside Police launched "Operation Brookdale"; an initiative aimed at crushing scramblers/quad motorbikes to crackdown on the illegal use and nuisance of these vehicles. Alongside this, Merseyside Police engage in educating young people about the dangers of reckless and intimidating use of these vehicles; an approach which has been hailed as the most successful tactic ever in dealing with this issue and one that is now employed as an all year-round operation (Fitzsimmons, 2019).

The recent news that the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport has called on all key stakeholders and other Governmental Departments to review current legislation and determine whether any legislative changes are necessary is welcomed. This report is recommending that Government and its authorities adopt the recommendations of this report in relation to the dangerous use of scrambler/quad motorbikes in public spaces before '*tragedy strikes again.*'

Recommendation 2: **Increasing awareness among the local community of the safety dangers associated with scrambler/quad misuse.**

The Forum will continue to engage with the Finglas community to communicate and continue to raise awareness of the safety dangers associated with the misuse of scramblers/quad motorbikes. This will be done, in conjunction with Finglas Community Gardaí, and will involve on-going campaigns to educate and highlight to young people and their parents the safety dangers associated with the misuse of these vehicles. In addition, the Forum will continue to communicate and report back, where applicable, to the relevant departmental group on this work.

Community Safety

The concept of community safety, which underpins the work of Finglas Safety Forum, has been described as a holistic approach to crime prevention that transcends the competencies of specific professional groups and agencies and cuts across disciplinary boundaries. In theory it:

- recognises that the levers and causes of crime lie far from the traditional reach of the criminal justice system;
- acknowledges that there is no single agency solution to crime and disorder – it is multifaceted in both its causes and its effects;
- recognises the need for social responses to crime which reflect the nature of the phenomenon itself and its multiple causes;
- allows for a holistic approach to crime, community safety, and associated issues which is 'problem-focused' rather than 'bureaucracy-premised';
- affords the potential coordination and pooling of knowledge, capacity, and resources.

(Morgan, 1991, in Maguire edits, 2007)

Joint Policing Committees

Joint Policing Committees (JPC) were established in 2008 under the provisions of Garda Síochána Act 2005. The purpose of JPCs is to provide a forum where a local authority and the senior Garda officers responsible for the policing of that area, with the participation of Oireachtas members and community interests, can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area. JPCs are intended to be partnerships which are cooperative in nature and raise awareness of and find solutions for issues impacting on, or causing concerns for, the local community. Through the work of a JPC both partners – the local authority and the Garda Síochána - along with Oireachtas members and community interests have the opportunity to contribute to the improved safety and quality of life of the community.

Finglas Safety Forum is represented on the Dublin North West JPC. It is also recognized by the JPC as a local policing forum. Coordination between the JPC and Finglas Safety Forum is facilitated by the provision of a report by the FSF Coordinator to JPC meetings.

1.2 The Finglas Safety Forum

Finglas Safety Forum (FSF) was set up in 2004 with funding and development support from Finglas Cabra Local Drug & Alcohol Task Force. The Task Force provides on-going organisational and administrative support to the Finglas Safety Forum and employs its Coordinator.

Finglas Safety Forum is a place-based problem-solving partnership involving Dublin City Council, An Garda Síochána, Fingal County Council and local residents. Its purpose is to facilitate coordination among all stakeholders aimed at making Finglas a safer place to live in, work in and visit. The key mechanism by which FSF promotes local social organisation

and connectedness is through a planned schedule of Safety Forum meetings in each neighbourhood in Finglas as follows:

- Finglas East
- Finglas West
- Finglas South
- Meakstown²

At these meetings, residents can raise related crime and estate management issues of concern to them with An Garda Síochána and local authority officials at Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council respectively.

Forum meetings, while they are open to all residents, tend to mainly attract the most committed residents active in resident associations, community organisations and local political parties. The views of these individuals are essential to the work of FSF. FSF is also very clear that it needs to hear and include the opinions of the wider population of Finglas. For this reason, FSF decided to undertake a study of the wider views of the local community in relation to safety.

1.3 Research aim, objectives and outcomes

The overarching aim of the research is for FSF and its partners to gain a greater understanding of the perception of safety among the wider population of residents in Finglas. For the purpose of the survey, safety is defined as how safe people feel from external crime and disorder in the home, on the street, coming and going from local services and facilities in the wider Finglas area.

The specific objectives include:

- To increase understanding of how safe residents feel in their homes.
- To increase understanding of how safe residents feel on the street where they live.
- To increase understanding of how safe residents feel in the wider Finglas area.
- To increase understanding of how safe residents feel going to and from local services and facilities.

The outcomes of this research are expected to:

- Build knowledge and understanding of barriers that impede participation at the forum meetings.
- Inform stronger and wider community engagement across all social groups within the local area.
- Provide relevant insight into ways that promote increased citizenship, community involvement and development.

² The Finglas Safety Forum area was extended in Autumn 2018 to include Meakstown which falls under the Fingal County Council catchment area.

Travellers living in Traveller halting sites (similar to the settled community) were clear that their sites had become less safe over the last 10 years as a result of drug use/dealing with/by the Traveller community resulting in more settled people in and out of these sites than ever before. Travellers struggled to socialise in Finglas, not because of safety concerns, but because many of the local pubs refuse to admit or serve Travellers.

The adult research participants' views of An Garda Síochána varied. Where there was consensus was in relation to the lack of a visible Garda presence across the area particularly at night. The question was raised on numerous occasions in the focus groups as to whether Finglas had a sufficient number of Gardaí. Focus group participants cited numerous situations where the Gardaí either did not turn up when they were called or turned up after the incident. The majority view was that the community in Finglas was increasingly being left to deal with things themselves.

Travellers and young people were particularly wary of the local Gardaí (with the exception of two or three individual Gardaí) because of their perceived tendency to make quick judgments and to stop and search people based on their family name, address and clothing/footwear. The young people were also wary of being seen near the Gardaí for fear of being seen as a rat/getting a rat scar. The Travellers also noted that some Gardaí would not come into some Traveller sites. Migrants also reported concerns that some Gardaí did not treat their issues seriously because they were migrants.

In conclusion, the clear view across the vast majority of research participants was that while Finglas had been a good place to live, it had gone into a downward spiral, with increasing levels of anti-social behaviour, linked by many to the prevalence of drugs and drug taking and the absence of a visible Garda presence, particularly at night.

3.2 A partnership approach to safety

Research participants were unanimously in favour of An Garda Síochána, the local community and the Council/s working together to make Finglas a safer place. They recognised the key dual role played by the Councils in relation to 1) the upkeep of the local environment and 2) as a landlord responsible for their tenants and their tenants' behaviour.

3.3 Awareness of the work of the Finglas Safety Forum

Approximately half of the research respondents were aware of the existence of the Finglas Safety Forum. Social media was the most common medium through which respondents were made aware of the existence and work of the Finglas Safety Forum. None of the young people were aware of the Forum or its work.

3 Conclusions

3.1 Safety in Finglas – An overview

The vast majority of research participants felt safe in their homes, coming and going from home, and out and about in Finglas during the day. Research participants generally felt less safe at night because of anti-social behaviour and noise, some of which was linked to groups of children and young people hanging around in gangs. Some parts of Finglas were seen to be less safe than other parts at night and particularly in the longer summer evening. Focus group participants, in particular, referenced new levels of aggression across parts of Finglas that made them reluctant to challenge individuals/groups engaging in anti-social behaviour.

Going to the local park was identified as the least safe activity by all research participants. Research participants' concerns focused on a number of specific parks (e.g. Tolka Valley Park and Mellows Park) with women again feeling less safe than men. Shopping and socializing at night were also activities that many research participants (survey respondents and focus group participants alike) had safety concerns about particularly at night. Male and female research participants alike indicated that they would not go out alone in the evenings.

Waiting for buses was another safety concern for many research participants linked to groups of people hanging around near bus stops as well as scramblers/ quad motorbikes on the footpaths. Bus use was generally not a concern during the day, however, it was an issue in the evenings particularly upstairs, where the majority of anti-social behaviour and intimidation of other passengers occurred.

Other safety related issues of concern to research participants included the use of scramblers/ quad motorbikes, illegal dumping, drug dealing, drug use and vandalism etc. Of these, the issue of most concern across the majority of research participants was the dangerous use of scrambler/ quad motorbikes at speed on the footpaths causing a significant danger to pedestrians/ cyclists etc. Other significant safety concerns identified included increasing levels of illegal dumping/fly tipping, open drug dealing, street drinking and what was described as 'wanton' vandalism of expensive public and private property.

Additional safety issues identified by focus group participants included a lack of respect for older and more vulnerable residents as well as increasing levels of opportunist petty crime (including bag/phone snatching and shop lifting). Begging was also identified as an intimidating activity for many residents, with a refusal to give often resulting in verbal abuse. The issue of loose horses and the absence of any clean-up by the horse owners was also identified as a safety concern by a smaller number of focus group participants and survey respondents.

Young people's views on safety focused largely on personal safety. This involved avoiding getting robbed, bullied, chased and staying out of physical and on-line fights. The young people involved in the research identified their homes and the Finglas Youth Resource Centre as places where they felt safe.

1.4 Research methodology

The research was conducted using a community survey supplemented by five focus groups. The survey questionnaire was completed both on-line and on paper/hard copy.

The Survey

The survey questionnaire consisted of 18 questions³ relating to the individual, their living/working arrangements and self-reported feelings on safety in the Finglas area. The survey opened on 22/06/2018 and was closed on 07/09/2018. Participation in the survey was promoted on-line using social media platforms and in person with the Finglas Safety Forum Coordinator reaching out to a wide variety of community groups and organisations operating within the Finglas area.

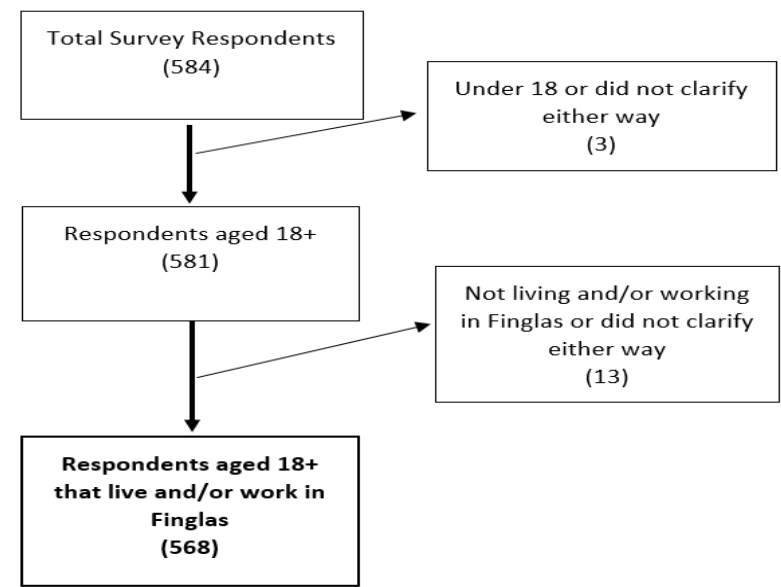
A total of 584 responses were received (70% online and 30% on paper), of these 568 were eligible for inclusion in the survey analysis. Ineligible survey responses included responses were:

- 1) The respondent did not indicate that they were over 18 and/or
- 2) The survey respondent did not live and/or work in the Finglas area.

See Figure 1.1 for details of the questionnaires that were excluded.

³ Where questions were skipped by respondents or not applicable to them, these numbers were excluded from the calculations for that question.

Figure 1.1 The process of identifying the valid sample (n=568)



The profile of survey respondents: Survey respondents (similar to other community surveys) were mostly female (75% respondents) between the age of 25 and 64 years. The predominant ethnic/cultural background was white Irish, with the majority of the respondents long-term Finglas residents for 20 years or more. The majority (89%) of survey respondents lived in households with more than one person, while 43% of respondents had one to two children aged under 18 in their household. (See Appendix 1 for a more detailed profile of survey respondents).

The Focus Groups

Five focus groups were conducted. The purpose of these groups was to capture the views and lived experiences of different groups living in the Finglas area. The focus groups also provided an opportunity to hear the voices of young people. These groups were organised with the support of local organisations and groups working locally. See Table 1.1 for details of these groups.

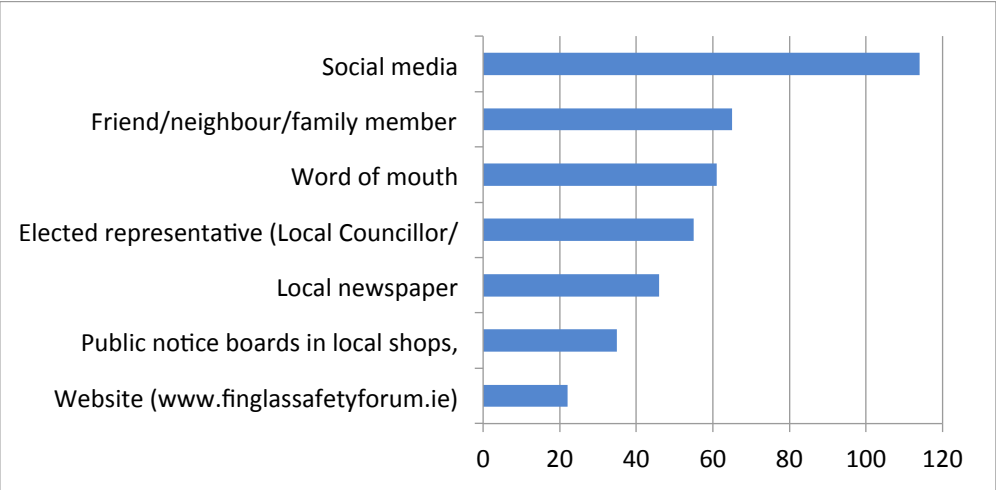
‘On my roadnew people with lots of problems have arrived and now they are causing lots of problems for all of us.’

‘The new Council tenants in the house a few doors down from us, would not put their rubbish out, instead they put the rubbish in the garden, which has brought rats and now everyone on the road has to deal with rats.’

2.8 Awareness of the work of the Finglas Safety Forum

Just over half of the survey respondents (53%) were aware of the existence of the Finglas Safety Forum. Social media, friends/neighbours/family and word of mouth were the most common medium through which respondents were made aware of the existence and work of the Finglas Safety Forum. A number of survey respondents also indicated that they had come across the FSF through their work or through the involvement in local groups. See Figure 2. 7 for details.

Figure 2.7 How survey respondents became aware of Finglas Community Safety Forum



Focus group participants were of the view that in the past, relationships with the local Gardaí and Travellers were better, however, currently many Gardaí appear to have a very poor opinion of Travellers.

‘They think we are all the same, but just like the settled community we have all different types of people and should not all be tarred with the same brush.’

‘In the past, we got to know a few local community Gardaí and one nice higher up Garda and we could deal with them, but they moved on and with them those relationships died. A lot of Gardaí have no connections with Travellers and don’t understand our ways.’

Because so many people in the Traveller community have the same names, the Traveller focus group participants reported the issue of mistaken identity and the Gardaí often bringing in the wrong person.

Migrants and An Garda Síochána

There was strong view among migrants that some Gardaí did not treat their concerns/issues seriously because they were migrants. There was also a clear view that once you got your citizenship you were treated more seriously.

‘I think the Gardaí take you more seriously when you are an Irish citizen. That is certainly my experience.’

Migrant focus group participants were also of the view that among the Gardaí some nationalities had poor reputations and that complicated things for migrants from those places.

‘As a Romanian, when I went to the Gardaí, I do not think they took me seriously because of my nationality. It was all going fine till they asked me where I came from and then they seemed to lose interest in me and my problem.’

2.7 A partnership approach to safety

Survey respondents were overwhelmingly (99%) in support of An Garda Síochána and Dublin City Council⁵ working together to make Finglas a safe place for all.

99% of survey respondents also agreed that the Council/s had an important role to play in keeping the environment in and around Finglas safe for local residents. There was 100% agreement that An Garda Síochána, the Council/s and the local community need to work together to make Finglas a safe place for all.

Quite a number of focus group participants had been in touch with their elected representatives to see whether anything could be done about the levels of anti-social behaviour locally but to date they did not believe anything had been achieved by this. A number of focus group participants had also been in touch with Council officials generally in relation to the anti-social behaviour of neighbouring Council tenants.

⁵ Fingal County Council were not part of the FSF at the time this survey was being developed and administered.

Table 1.1 Focus groups held as part of the research				
Group	Date	Total participants	Gender breakdown	Other comments
Travellers	23 rd July 2018	9	100% female	All of the individuals who attended were long term Finglas residents.
Migrants	8 th Sept 2018	12	50:50 female/male	This group was a mixture of people who were living/who had lived in Finglas and people who had worked in Finglas.
Older people	3 rd October 2018	6	100% female	All of the individuals who attended were long term Finglas residents.
Parents	10 th October 2018	14	50:50 female/male	There was a mixture of long terms residents and migrants who had made Finglas their home. There was a good mixture of age groups with parents and grandparents represented.
Young people	7 th November 2018	6	33:77 female/male	All of the young people who attended were brought up in the Finglas area. Most were still in school, however, 1-2 had finished school.
Total number of participants		47		

The focus group discussion focused on the key research discussion questions. The groups were facilitated by the independent researcher along with the Finglas Safety Co-ordinator in attendance to input on the role and purpose of the study and the functions of the Finglas Safety Forum. Adult focus group participants signed formal consent forms, while under 18 focus group participants had to sign individuals consent forms and consent forms signed by their parent/guardian had to be obtained beforehand also.

2 Research Findings

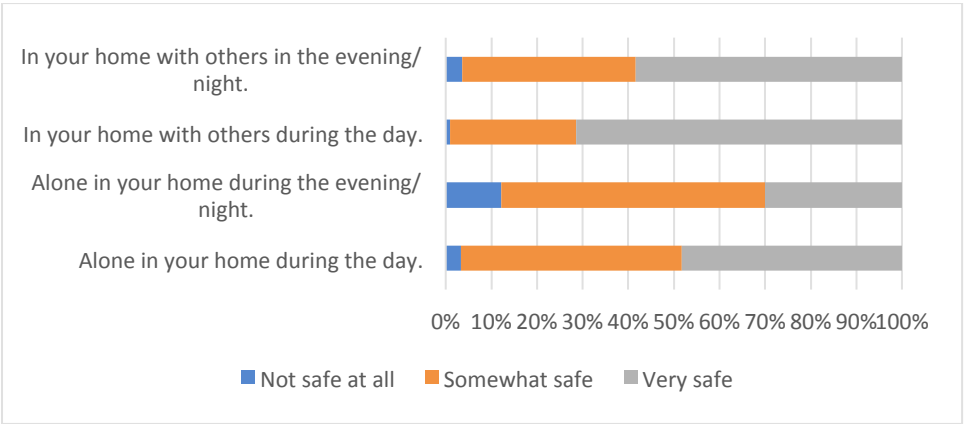
2.1 Overview

This section details the findings of the survey and insights arising from the focus group in relation to safety at home, safety at work, general safety in Finglas and safety issues for particular groups. It also explores awareness of the work of the Finglas Safety Forum.

2.2 Safety at home

>95% of survey respondents and the vast majority of focus group participants reported feeling somewhat/very safe in their homes during the daytime, while 85% reported feeling somewhat/very safe at home alone in the evening. See Figure 2.1 for details. Quite a few focus group participants indicated that they had house alarms fitted over the last three to five years in response to growing levels of anti-social behaviour and that this had the effect of making them feel safer in their homes.

Figure 2.1 Safety in your home



92% of survey respondents reported generally feeling comfortable coming and going from where they live during the day. This percentage fell to 70% at night. 78% of survey respondents were of the view that vehicles parked on their road were generally safe while 37% of survey respondents indicated that their road was not generally a safe place for children to play.

A number of survey respondents and focus group participants reported issues related to young teenagers attacking or at least picking on their neighbours' houses breaking windows and/or 'egging the house or the car'. This was the cause of some significant distress to those who experienced it. Many of the residents who participated in the survey and focus groups linked at least some of this behaviour to 'groups of children and young people hanging around unsupervised' particularly in the early evening (e.g. 7-10pm). Focus group participants were concerned that, left unchecked, these children and young people ran the risk of getting into more serious trouble and 'going down the wrong road'.

One male focus group participant described it in the following terms: 'Things had gone quiet where I live for the last couple of years, but just recently things have begun to kick off. I

local Gardaí often make quick judgments on individuals based on where you live, your family name and what you are wearing.

'There was one day I had just come out of my house, when I got stopped and searched by Gardaí, they kept asking me if I had anything on me, I didn't. When I asked them why they stopped me they said it was because I live on that particular street.'

'I reckon I get pulled by the Guards 'cause I have a cousin and an uncle who are in trouble, I think they think that because they are scumbags that I am going to be one too.'

'The Gardaí pull you for what you are wearing, if you are wearing expensive trainers, they are more likely to pull you, if you have your hoodie up (even if it is cold) they are more likely to stop and search.'

The vast majority of the young people indicated that they would be very reluctant to go the Gardaí for fear of others hearing about it and being labelled a rat/getting a rat scar.

'I am regularly targeted and followed, I am used to it. One day I was (a few) minutes from the Garda Station when I was stopped and surrounded, they said they were going to hop on me. I was really scared that day especially as I had two girls with me that I was looking after. So, I went to the Garda station for help. Normally I would not go, because I don't want to be labelled a rat, but that day I was too scared. A Garda eventually came out to me and started talking with me they told me that they could not help me, there was nothing they could do and to make sure I got home safe. That was no help, I don't really think they cared at all.'

'You don't want to be seen to be talking to the police, if you do you can get a rat scar.'

There was also some discussion by the group in relation to what they considered at times 'heavy handed' behaviour of some local Gardaí.

'Some times the Gardaí get involved with too much force, when all that is really needed is for them to turn up.'

Travellers and the Garda Síochána

Traveller survey respondents and focus group participants alike were clear that Travellers generally do not trust the Gardaí and will only call them as a last resort. The Travellers linked some of this lack of trust back to when the Gardaí did not intervene at the time of an internal local Traveller feud a few years ago. The Travellers described the attitude of Gardaí at that time was 'to sort it out among yourselves'.

When Travellers do call the Gardaí it was reported that the Gardaí can take a long time to come and sometimes, they do not come at all. It was also noted that some Gardaí (and the Ambulance Services) will not come into some Traveller sites. *'They will wait at the site entrance and we will have to bring the person out.'*

Garda presence and, as a result, increased levels of anti-social behaviour locally. There was a strong view among the participants that there should be more Garda patrols, taking names and acting as a deterrent.

‘There is a lack of visibility of police in the area, particularly in relation to gangs congregating and the rise of scramblers being driven erratically and dangerously every day.’

‘No Garda presence has me terrified and the South at Tolka Park is terrifying especially having to cross through with two children every day.’

The question was also raised as to whether there was enough Gardaí allocated to the Finglas area. Quite a few research participants indicated that when they had called the Gardaí they had either not arrived, or had arrived too late to do anything.

Quite a number of focus group participants were of the view that while the Gardaí are aware of what is going on, nothing was being done to improve things and people were becoming increasingly wary of reporting crimes.

‘There is always a level of threat there, the guy selling drugswhere I live always says hello, he knows where I live so if I did report him, he would know where to find me and that stops me doing anything, I am too old to draw trouble to me or my family. I just want to live a peaceful life.’

It was noted that in the past there were a lot more residents associations locally who used to take action and liaise with the Gardaí in relation to anti-social behaviour, however, now with the increasing levels of anti-social, few in the local community want to take on that responsibility anymore.

Many focus group participants indicated that in their opinion there was little point in calling the Gardaí, their view being that *‘by the time the Gardaí came the incident would be over’*. One participant specifically cited an example of *‘two cars being set on fire by kids but no Guards turning up till they were long gone’*. Others were of the view that if there was a house break-in there was little point in calling the Gardaí because they believed that house break-ins were regarded as acceptable crimes.’

Other participants recognised that the Gardaí have a very hard job to do locally and would never be able to please or be there for everyone.

‘The Gardaí, they have a hard job and just cannot be everywhere.’

Young people and An Garda Síochána

The young people’s (who participated in the research) views on the Gardaí were very different to the other groups consulted. Most of the young people were wary of the majority of local Gardaí (with two or three local exceptions). Quite a number of the young people reported been stopped and searched by Gardaí. Others reported calling the Gardaí on various occasions but with no response. The young people were of the view that the

have had children throwing stones at my windows at night, they managed to break one. What they want is to be chased, but I am not a confrontational person. So, what I did was (given that I know where they live) go to the Guards about it.’

It was clear from the focus groups that, in general terms, certain parts of Finglas experienced higher levels of anti-social behaviour than others with pockets of anti-social behaviour across the entire Finglas area.

‘Where I live in West Finglas there is always a lot going on, on the road where I live. It is worse at night, it is noisy, and there is fighting and shouting at times. I do feel safe there though, as I know everyone on the road and they know me and my family’.

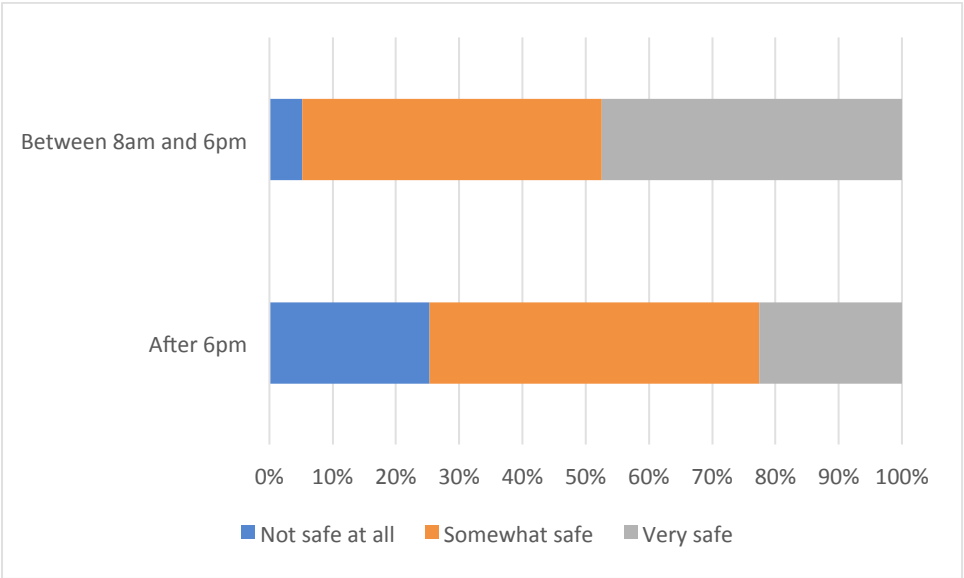
‘I live in the south and there are no real problems, where I live it is generally quiet’.

2.3 Safety at work

201 (35%) of survey respondents indicated that they worked in the Finglas area. Of these 37⁴ (18%) of survey respondents reported feeling ‘not safe at all’ in their work at any time of the day. After 6pm the number of people who felt not safe at all increased to 25% of survey respondents. Feelings of being ‘not safe at all’ at work after 6pm, were higher among females (29%) compared to males (15%). With 36% of males reporting feeling ‘very safe’ in work after hours compared to 16% of women. See Figure 2.2 for details.

⁴ These 37 respondents also reported feeling unsafe at home at some point too.

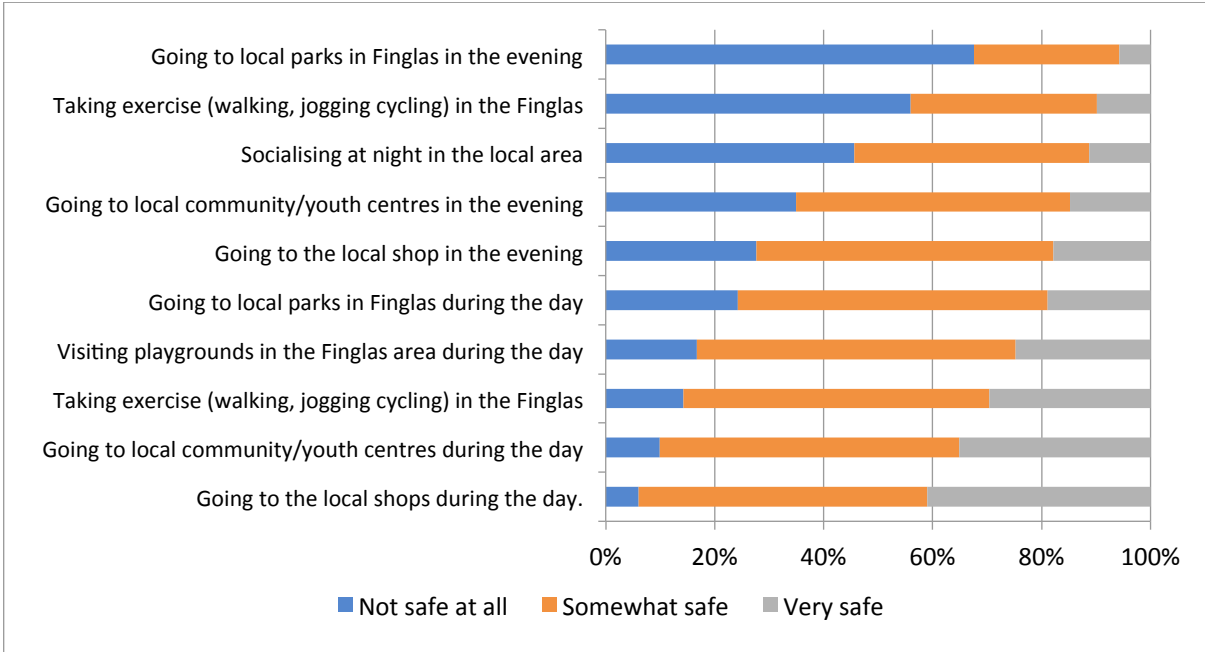
Figure 2.2 Safety at work



2.4 General safety in Finglas

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions to gauge how safe they felt out and about in Finglas. In general terms the majority of survey respondents reported feeling somewhat/very safe undertaking a range of activities (including shopping, taking exercise, going the playgrounds and parks) during the day. However, the significant majority of survey respondents and focus group participants reported feeling significantly less safe at night than during the day. See Figure 2.3 for details.

Figure 2.3 How safe survey respondents felt engaging in particular activities in Finglas



‘There are lots of fights in our school and our teachers will not get involved in a fight.’

Travellers

The Travellers who completed the survey and the Travellers who participated in the focus group, without exception, all felt less safe on Traveller sites than they did years ago. There was a clear view that over the last 10 years Traveller halting sites had become less safe.

‘We cannot let the children play outside on the site anymore as people from outside are coming into the site at speed in cars, it’s just not safe for the kids so we have to keep them in.’

‘I would now be afraid to go away for a few days and leave my van empty. I could come back and all the things I had saved up to buy could be gone. Taken by one of our own who needed the money to buy drugs or taken by others visiting the site.’

Travellers living in group housing in contrast, reported feeling pretty safe, although always made sure to lock their doors at night. Travellers linked their feelings of being less safe to the increasing numbers of Travellers using drugs, which in turn was leading to petty theft to feed habits and in some cases drug dealers coming to the site looking for family members to pay a drug debt.

‘Traveller families are regularly being threatened with violence and being burnt out if they do not cover a family member’s drug debt.’

‘There is a lot more settled people in and out of our sites than there ever was before.... They drive in at speed looking to buy or to sell or to collect their money making it not safe for our children to play, so we have to keep them in.’

‘The Gardaí do not police Traveller sites and this has allowed feuding to happen, now it is the settled community that is the threat and we need the Gardaí’s help to police this.’

2.6 An Garda Síochána

There were mixed views among research participants about the Gardaí. Many research participants recognised that they had a hard job and that they were probably under resourced. Notwithstanding there was a general view that they were not very visible locally, particularly at night, and that when you called them it often took a long time for them to respond/if at all. Focus group participants were of the view that trust in the Gardaí had weakened and in some locations in Finglas trust in the Gardaí had entirely gone, as people were left to deal with things themselves.

The question was raised at various focus group discussions *‘Where are the Gardaí and why are there no foot patrols?’* Quite a few of the focus group participants spoke about how they would have seen and known the Community Gardaí out and about years ago, but how they never saw Gardaí now except in cars. There was a general view that there was a lack of

‘Everyone has one person that they clash with. Clashing with one person is not a problem really, the problem is when lots of other people and then gangs of people get involved.’

‘You often get chased, mostly because the other person is looking for a fight. All you have to do is make eye contact and they make out that you are staring/ giving them the eye and they come after you. Not only do they come after you they get their friends to come after you too. Then what you have to do is get your friends to come after them with you and that’s how you get big groups fighting, sometime you can have 150 people involved.’

The young people consulted were of the view that the fights could be traced back to an argument between two people and then others getting involved.

‘The problem goes back to two people having an argument, then their best friends get involved and then their brothers and sisters and then it takes on a life of its own...this is how arguments turn into fights and feuds’.

Common venues for fights were identified as: ‘Johnstown Park’, ‘the field near the Garda station’ and ‘the field near Dunnes Stores’. It was also noted that fights between individuals can go online where they get turned into a new story and this in turn can escalate the situation. The actual physical fights, often, also get recorded and put on snapchat, ensuring the feud continues after the fight.

‘I am constantly getting threatened, it starts on the street and then it moves to the keyboard warriors on Facebook. On Facebook and on the streets things that happen get twisted and new stories get made. It sometime feels like you are in a movie’.

The young people who participated in this research had different strategies for staying safe.

‘In Finglas you don’t know who has your back, my strategy is to have a small circle of friends (that go back to primary school) who I know have my back.’

‘Anytime you are out in Finglas you hide everything (phone, money, headphones) in case they get robbed. You just keep your head down and stay out of trouble’...

‘If you want to survive in Finglas if somebody asks you for something, you have to give it, you cannot say no.’

The places the young people consulted indicated they generally felt safe where in their homes and at the Finglas Youth Resource Centre.

‘(The Centre) is a safe place, if we have a problem here with someone, we talk it out and it ends here.’

Worryingly none of the focus group participants reported feeling particularly safe in their schools for various reasons.

‘There are students on drugs and drinking in our school.’

It was noted that the summer time was particularly difficult with long warm evenings, leading to people ‘hanging around outside’ much later in the evenings.

Using the local Parks

It is interesting to note that ‘Going to the park’ was identified as the least safe activity both during the day (24%) and at night (67%). Few issues were reported with some parks (e.g. Poppintree Park) but a number of specific Parks, for example, Tolka Valley Park and Mellows Park were specifically identified as having lots of safety issues by survey respondents and focus group participants alike.

‘The scramblers in Tolka Valley Park ruin our community and endanger healthy active lifestyle of locals. They terrify innocent families.’

‘Kids on them motorbikes ride across the park and scare smallies at the playground on purpose.’

‘In Tolka Park depending on the weather and the time of day there can be kids hanging around drinking and taking drugs, it is much worse in fine weather.’

‘Where there are people hanging around, I do not speak (my language) as I don’t want to draw attention to myself.’

‘You are under constant observation in the Park and they know how to intimidate people and get under your skin.’

‘The park in Ballygall place has a lot of drinking.’

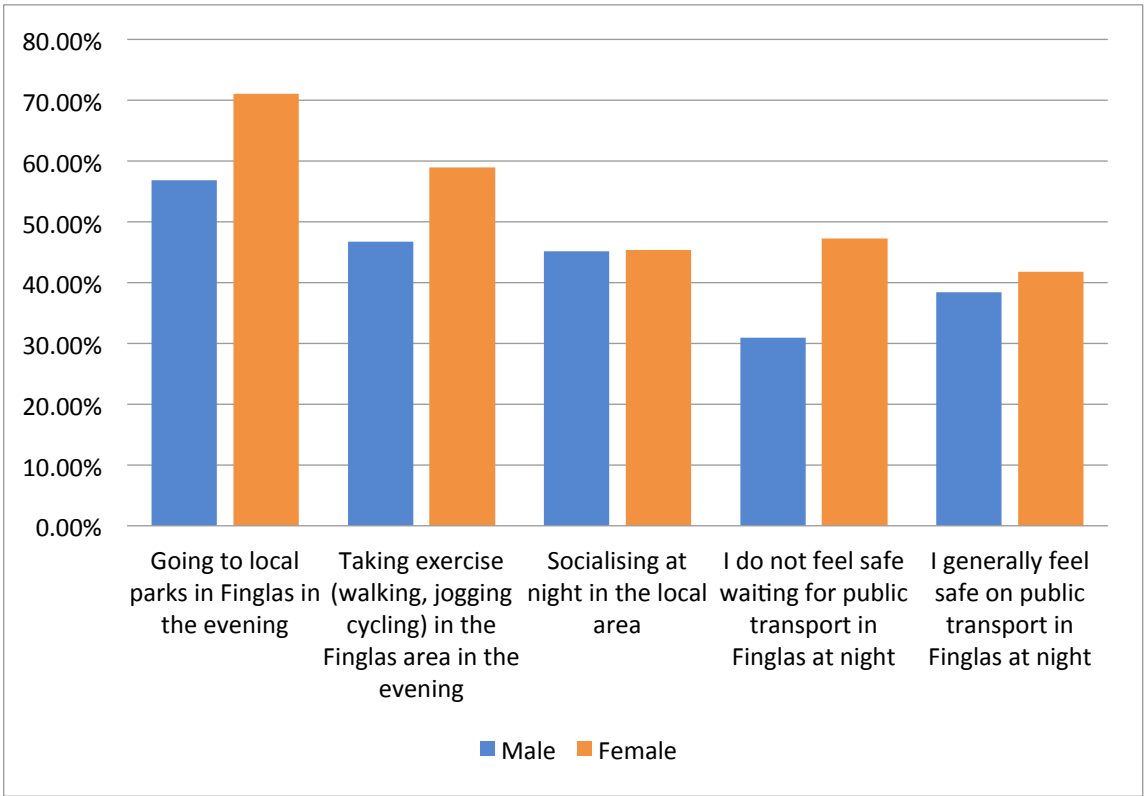
‘Drug dealing is an ongoing issue in Barry Park.’

‘There are men and women drinking alcohol all day in Mellows Park.’

‘There are rats in Mellows Park, I am scared of rats.’

It is the case that a higher proportion of women than men reported feeling not safe across a range of activities. Focus group participants reported that the situation was worse in the summer months and in the long summer evenings. See Figure 2.4 for details.

Figure 2.4 Feeling ‘not safe’ broken down by gender across a range of activities



Taking exercise

Almost 60% (three out of five) of the women and almost 50% of the men surveyed did not feel safe undertaking exercise locally at night. Within the focus groups, one individual cycling for exercise purposes described how he had been ‘knocked off my bike and had my bike stolen’. This feeling of not being safe taking exercise had clearly put a lot of research participants off doing exercise locally and something that some individuals struggled with.

Shopping

40% of survey respondents indicated that they felt very safe shopping in Finglas in the day, though, this fell to 18% at night. Focus group participants linked their feelings of anxiety to lots of people hanging around in various states of intoxication, levels of anti-social behaviour and begging around the shops.

‘There are a lot of people very high, begging and arguing day and night around our local shops, it is very unnerving.’

At the shops on the Cappagh Road, focus group participants reported there can be as many as 20 people hanging around outside, which can be very off-putting.

Socialising

The vast majority of focus group participants (male and female) indicated that they would not go out alone in the evening in Finglas as they did not consider it safe.

‘People are intimidated by the begging and the hassle and abuse you get if you do not give something.’

‘Begging is an issue near the shops and the Finglas Centre, people are always asking and hassling you for money or cigarettes. If you refuse/don’t give them any, they verbally abuse you. It can be quite intimidating. Begging also happens at the garage and at LIDL and ALDI.’

Horses and specifically horse poo

Many focus group participants were concerned about the amount of loose horses and associated horse poo in the local area.

‘They bring horses down there so now the place is covered in horse shit. If I left my dog poo, I would have to clean it up or I would be fined. I cannot understand why they are allowed to let their horses be there and not clean up and hang around.’

Other issues variously mentioned included:

- ‘Cruelty to animals’
- ‘Levels of drink driving’ (including ‘underage drink drinking’)
- Parking/double parking in estates/or road that makes it difficult for children to play and other cars to pass
- ‘Public urination’
- ‘Racial harassment’/‘discrimination’/‘ethnic hatred’
- ‘Sexual harassment in public places’
- ‘Shootings’
- ‘Speeding cars, vans and bikes’ (mean children cannot go out to play)
- ‘Stray dogs (‘you can’t go walking around Cappagh Road without being chased or attacked by them’)
- ‘The trouble caused in Finglas by people from other areas’
- Emergency service response times (particularly where specific addresses are not on google maps)

2.5 Safety issues for particular groups

Young people

The young people consulted were clear that violence which includes being robbed, bullied chased as well as fighting are normal for them in Finglas.

‘When we went back to school after mid-term, we talk about a local girl who had got beaten up, we talked about our local shopkeeper who had been robbed and a stabbing near the shops in Cappagh. The thing was that none of us were surprised by any of it, it all seems to be quite normal and that’s not right. It is not normal really, but we now think it is...’

There was a lot of discussion about the emergence and role of gangs (made up of young people) in Finglas as part of the focus group discussion.

‘Where I live in Finglas West many of the shops were derelict here but a new shop opened and that was great. Then groups of young people started hanging around outside, they were passing on drugs and it became intimidating to go there’.

Survey respondents and focus group participants alike frequently identified levels of public drinking and drug taking as issues that contributed to their anxiety levels when out and about in the local area. Drinking and drug taking were also linked to increased noise and anti-social behaviour levels.

Vandalism of public and private property (including fire-setting)

Survey respondents and focus group participants identified many examples of vandalism to both private, and more frequently, public property (including deliberate glass breaking).

‘There are a lot of teenagers hanging about and making great damage (burning, digging up the pavement and the like), sometimes even during the day it is hard to use the playground.’

The local playgrounds were identified by various research participants as a regular target of this vandalism.

‘There has been a lot of damage done with bottles deliberately smashed to make the place unsafe for children to play.’

‘The fine new playground near me was burnt causing thousands of euros work of damage for no reason I can see.’

Other issues identified by focus group and survey respondents included:

Respect for older and more vulnerable residents

A general lack of respect among the younger generation for older and more vulnerable residents living locally. *‘I will not let my husband blow the horn at people when we are out as you don’t know who you are dealing with and what their reaction might be.’*

Petty crime

Numerous examples of petty crime were identified by research participants. These included bag snatching and shop lifting as well the snatching of phones, wallets and trainers from adults, teens and children.

‘Petty theft in the local retail sector is so common the shops have stopped reporting it to the Gardaí.’

Begging

Begging was identified by focus group participants, in particular, as an intimidating issue for many local residents. It was generally reported as occurring at/near the local shops/churches.

‘If I go out at night I never go alone, I always go with someone else and we all leave together.’

‘I always get a taxi even if it is close, I would not walk as you could be beaten up.’

‘I was the subject of an attempted carjacking. It happened between 10 and 11pm when they tried to stop me, but I just kept going. I saw no point in calling the Guards to report it, what could they have done, it was all over’.

The Traveller focus group participants detailed how difficult it was for them as Travellers to socialise in Finglas as many of the local pubs refused to admit or serve Travellers. Their socialising strategy therefore involved them heading into the city centre by bus and getting a taxi or a lift home as a way of staying safe.

Public transport (buses)

The two main bus routes that service Finglas are the 17A and the 40. The No. 17A runs from Blanchardstown to Coolock through Finglas. The No. 40 Bus runs from Charlestown Shopping Centre to Liffey Valley Shopping Centre.

Waiting for public transport in Finglas was an activity that approximately two in five survey respondents did not feel safe undertaking both at night (43%) and during the day (41%). The reasons why people did not feel safe were generally related to people congregating and hanging out at/near the bus stops as well as scramblers/ quad motorbikes on the footpaths.

90% of survey respondents reported feeling safe on public transport during the day but this fell by 30% at night, with just 60% of survey respondents reporting feeling somewhat safe or safe on public transport at night in Finglas. Activities identified by focus group participants as intimidating included:

‘People playing their music very loud.’

‘Passengers not sitting down upstairs.’

‘People being drunk or drugged up and being in other passengers’ faces.’

‘People injecting.’

‘Bottles get smashed together with shouting and screaming.’

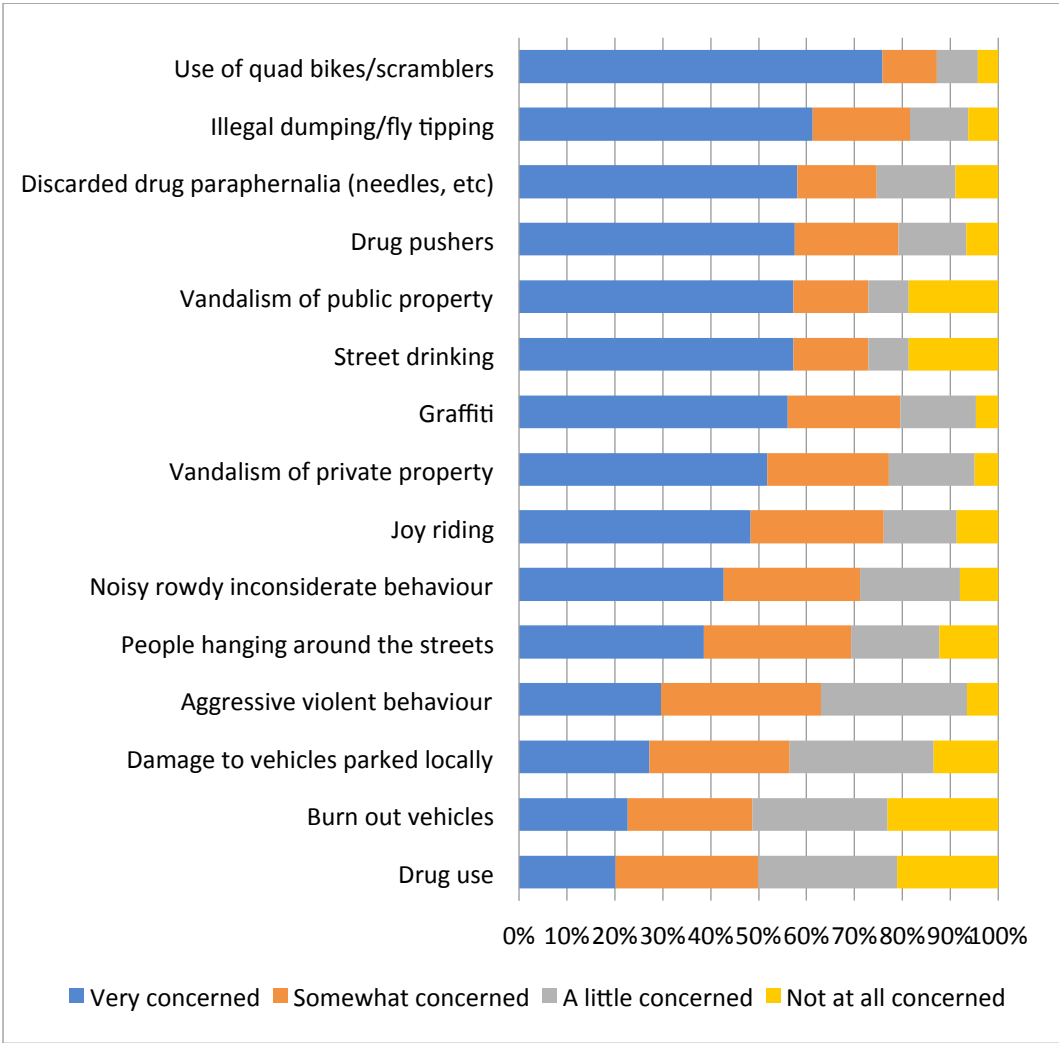
Most of this anti-social behaviour occurred upstairs and for that reason many of the research participants reported that they would not go upstairs.

‘If I have to get the bus on my own, I would never go upstairs, it’s not safe.’

Other safety related issues

Survey respondents ranked a number of other safety related issues, identified at FSF meetings. Issues ranked included the use of scramblers/ quad motorbikes, illegal dumping, drug dealing, drug use and vandalism etc. See Figure 2.5 for details.

Figure 2.5 Other local safety related concerns



Scramblers/ quad bikes

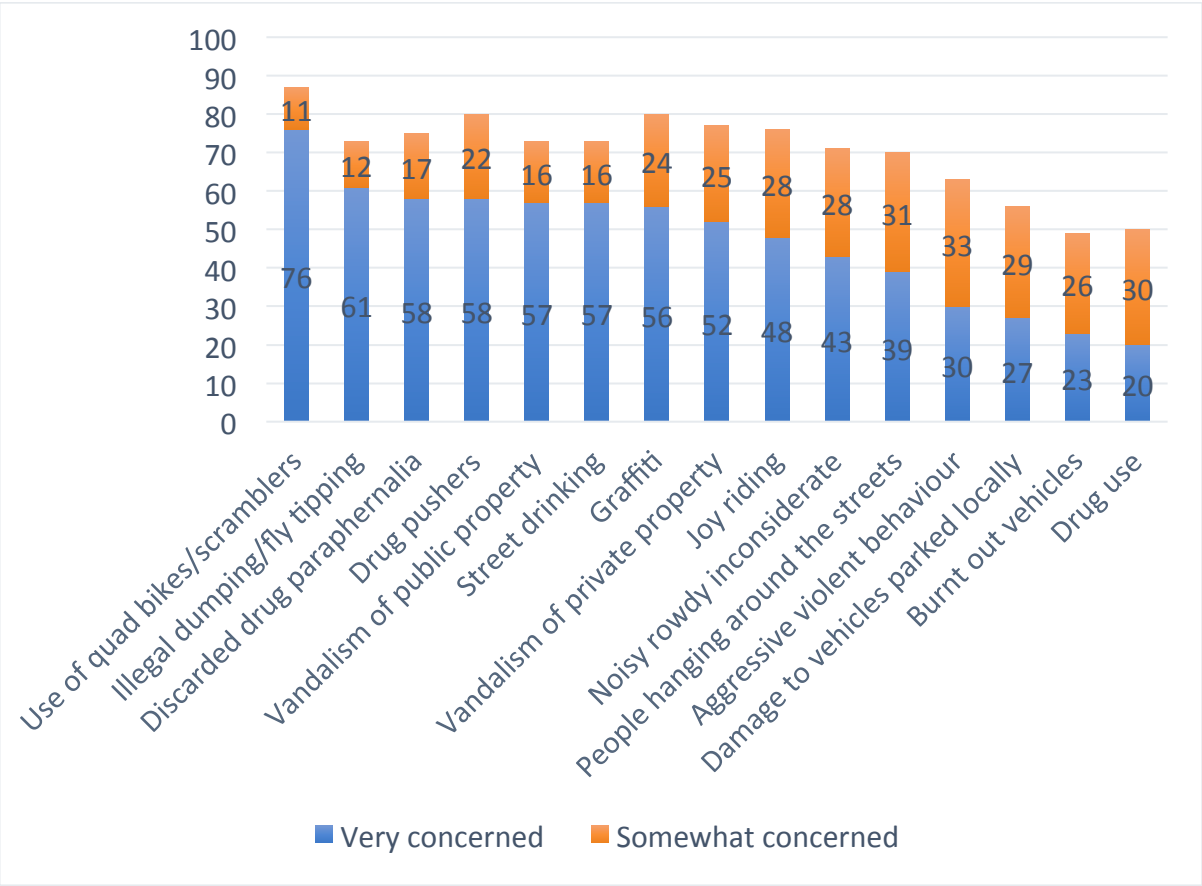
The use of scramblers/ quad motorbikes was identified as the safety issue of most concern among survey respondents (76% were ‘very concerned’ and 11% were somewhat concerned). The use of scramblers/ quad motorbikes was also an issue for many focus group participants.

‘They are putting people’s lives in danger: children, adults and older people, the real problem is that they ride them on the footpath at speed and you just have to get out of their way’.

Over 50% of survey respondents were ‘very concerned’ about illegal dumping/fly tipping, discarded drug paraphernalia, drug pushers, vandalism of public property, street drinking,

graffiti and vandalism of private property. See Figure 2.6 for more details of how the issues were ranked.

Figure 2.6 Local issues survey respondent were ‘very’ and ‘somewhat’ concerned about



Illegal dumping/fly tipping,

Dumping was identified as an issue by survey respondents and focus group participants alike. The view was that some households preferred to dump their rubbish than pay the bin charge. There was a view also that because no one was being stopped from doing this the situation was getting worse and, in some cases, generating health hazards with an increase in the local rat population.

Drug dealing and street drinking

The issues of drug dealing and street drinking were of concern to all survey respondents and focus group participants. These issues were often linked to gangs of people hanging around in public places, near bus stops and near shops. This practice was consistently identified across all the focus groups as ‘intimidating’. It was also frequently linked with open drug dealing and drinking both during the day and at night.

‘At this stage I and other local people just walk past the dealers, that is the norm.’